

SEP 07 2006

Appl. No.: 10/522,294  
Reply to Office Action of: 06/19/2006

REMARKS

Claim 19 has been cancelled and its features have been added to claim 18. In view of page 4 of the office action, claim 18 should be in condition for allowance.

In regard to claim 15 and the term "inclined lateral walls", the examiner is requested to reconsider his objection. The written description clearly describes the lateral walls 60 as being slightly inclined and the surface of the shoulder 52 of the contact 24 being complementary (see page 6, lines 5-6). Thus, the shoulder 52 (as seen in Fig. 2A) has lateral walls which are slightly inclined. There is nothing wrong with the description of the lateral walls being slightly inclined and, thus, there being "inclined lateral walls" as shown in the drawings.

Claims 9-18 and 20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being unpatentable over Mancini et al. (US 3,781,760). The examiner is requested to reconsider this rejection.

Claim 9 has been amended above to clarify applicant's claimed invention. Claims 13, 15 and 16 have been cancelled in view of the amended language of claim 9. Claim 9 claims that the nonplanar shoulder and the nonplanar bearing surface comprise inclined lateral walls which cooperate to form a wedging contact between the nonplanar bearing surface and the nonplanar shoulder. This amendment to claim 9 should not require further search or consideration in view of the previous limitations in claims 13, 15 and 16. In regard to the examiner's comments regarding old claim 13, the latch portion 50 of Mancini has latching surfaces 58, 62 which at

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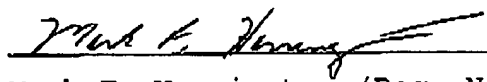
angled relative to each other, but they are not lateral walls. Likewise, surface 54 is described as a bottom surface; not a lateral wall. In regard to the examiner's comments regarding old claim 15, the surface 54 is described as a bottom surface; not a lateral wall. The lateral sides (un-numbered) of the nose 52 near the top 60 of the nose are not shown or described as being inclined. Center portion 76 is described as being deformed, but there is no disclosure or suggestion of the side walls (un-numbered) of the center portion 76 becoming inclined at any point. In regard to the examiner's comments regarding old claim 16, the surface 54 is described as a bottom surface; not a lateral wall. The surface of the contact 24 below spring 56 is a bottom surface of the spring 56. Although it is inclined, the bottom surface of the spring 56 is not a lateral wall.

With applicants' invention, because of the inclined lateral walls, there is both a wedging effect and an increased area of contact between the contact and the housing at the shoulder and bearing surface. The prior art does not disclose or suggest inclined lateral walls which provide such an increased area of contact. The prior art merely has flat surfaces which do not provided an increased area of contact as applicants' inclined lateral walls. The art of record does not disclose or suggest a nonplanar shoulder and a nonplanar bearing surface which comprise inclined lateral walls that cooperate to form a wedging contact between the nonplanar bearing surface and the nonplanar shoulder. The features of claim 9 are not disclosed or suggested in the art of record. Therefore, claim 9 is patentable and should be allowed.

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For all of the foregoing reasons, it is respectfully submitted that all of the claims now present in the application are clearly novel and patentable over the prior art of record. Accordingly, favorable reconsideration and allowance is respectfully requested. Should any unresolved issue remain, the examiner is invited to call applicants' attorney at the telephone number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,

  
Mark F. Harrington (Reg. No. 31,686)

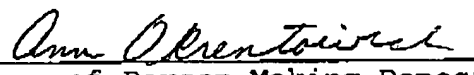
9/7/06  
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